1: Leitner L-3 (1866-93) 1893? AV3 Dard AV3

The most curious custom which seems to
permeate these countries is to foster relationship in nursing, where 853
a nurse and all her relations come not only within the prohibited 608
degrees, which is against the spirit of Muhammedanism, but also create the only real bond of true attachment that I have seen in Dardistan, where other relatives seemed always engaged in murdering one another.

Nearly all the chiefs in Dardistan give their children to persons of low degree to nurse, and these and the children of the nurse become attached to them throughout life and are their only friends. But this foster-relationship is also taken in order 609
to get rid of the consequences, say, of crime; for instance, in the case of adultery, or supposed adultery, the suspected person who declares that he enters into the relationship of a son to the woman with whom he is suspected, after a certain penalty, is really accepted in that position, and the trust is in no case betrayed. It is the only kind of forgiveness which is given in [564]
Dardistan generally to that sort of transgression; but, further than that, drinking milk with some one, or appointing some one as foster-father, which is done by crossing two vases of milk, creates the same relationship, except amongst the noble caste of Shins, who were expelled by the Brahmins from India or Kashmir, and who hold the cow in abhorence as one of their religious dogmas, whereas, in other ways, they are really Brahmins, among whom we find Hinduism peeping out through the thin crust of Muhammedanism.

The subject of caste, by the way, is also one which is generally 000
misunderstood, and which, if developed on Christian lines, would give us the perfection of human society, and solve many of the problems with which we are dealing in Europe in more advanced civilisations. I have just read with concern some remarks against caste by Sir John Petheram, who has been in India some three or four years. I think that before people speak on subjects of such intricacy, they should take the position of students of the question, learn at least one of the classical and one of the vernacular languages of India, and then alone assume the role of teachers whilst continuing to be learners; even in regard to such subjects of infant-marriage and the prohibition of widow remarriage, there is a side of the question which has not yet been put sufficiently before the British public. Infant-marriage, when

Biddulph G-3 (1873-1878) 1880 AU1 Afghanistan AU1
4 AV3 Dard AV3

his foster kindred accompany him. On the other hand, if he rises to influence, his foster-father is generally his most confidential adviser, and his foster-brothers are employed on the most important missions. 608

The custom of cementing friendship by the milk connection seems a favourite one. Should a woman dream that she has adopted any person as a son, or should any man dream that he has been adopted by a certain woman, the connection is carried out in the same way as the forced adoption before mentioned, and nobody would think of refusing to recognise it. The practice is now falling somewhat into disuse, but it was extremely common not many years ago. Milk from a woman's breast is esteemed a sovereign remedy for cataract and other eye-diseases. A resort to it also establishes the milk-tie for ever afterwards. [787] [757]

It is sometimes customary for a young couple, at the time of marriage, to induce a mutual friend to become their foster-father. The tie is ratified at the time of eating bread together. Bride and bridegroom being seated opposite to one another, the foster-father elect seats himself between them, and taking a piece of bread in each hand crosses his arms, observing to keep the right one uppermost, and puts the bread into their mouths. From that time he is regarded as their father.

The foster relationship is regarded as so close, that marriage between foster relations would be looked upon as incestuous, and, in spite of the precepts of the Koran, it would be impossible for a man to marry the widow of his foster-son. [835]

The formation of these ties is practised in a peculiar way among the Ashimadek clans of Chitral. It is customary for every infant to be suckled in turn by every nursing mother of the clan; consequently there is a constant interchange of infants going on among the mothers, for the purpose of strengthening tribal unity. [953]

The Shins are noted for their miserly habits, which they sometimes carry to great extremes. Every man has a secret hiding place in the mountains, where he conceals his money, metal pots, wife's jewels, and all his most valuable property. Occasional stealthy visits are paid to the treasure, which is never taken out for use except on festive occasions. No feeling of honour seems to exist as to the appropriation of another's treasure should it by chance be discovered, and frequent quarrels arise from this cause. Treasures are frequently lost altogether by the sudden death of the owner, 454 [685]